

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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Sweetheart of foreign missions

Philip Newberry, 2, the Southern Baptist missionary child who lost his hands and feet through amputations last April, enjoys chocolate-flavored instant breakfast and bacon. He can pick up a cup or a drink container and drink without a straw, but a straw makes it easier — and more fun. Missionaries Randy and Jan Newberry and their children, Amy, 15, Joey, 13, and Philip, will return to Brazil in mid-January. See story on page 4. (BP) PHOTO By Stanley Leary.

Foy Valentine receives Clarence Jordan award

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Foy Valentine, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, has been honored by the Clarence Jordan Center of Southern Seminary here for "outstanding contributions" in Christian ethics.

Valentine, the second recipient of the honor, was recognized for his "sacrificial service, prophetic

witness, exemplary life and outstanding leadership" in directing the work of the Christian Life Commission since 1960.

The special recognition is awarded in honor of Clarence Jordan, a Southern Baptist Greek and New Testament scholar who was a pioneer in racial reconciliation during the turbulent 1950s and 1960s. Jordan, a

graduate of Southern Seminary, founded Koinonia Farm outside Americus, Ga., a Christian community where Valentine worked for a summer after graduating from Baylor University.

Jordan, known for his "Cotton Patch" translations of New Testament writings, died in 1969.

Southern Seminary ethics professor

Paul Simmons, who made the presentation, praised Valentine for his "prophetic stands" on issues such as racial justice, economic opportunity and political responsibility.

Valentine, he said, has been "committed to a vision of God's kingdom beyond all earthly prizes and beyond all denominational politics and institutions."

Tennessee parents don't want sanitized schools

By Jordan Lorence

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — Federal Judge Thomas Hull ruled last month that the children of six Tennessee families did not have to be forcibly exposed to educational material that violated their religious convictions, and could instead be taught to read at home.

The Hawkins County, Tenn., school district precipitated the dispute with its harsh reaction to the complaints of several parents. In 1983, they had objected on religious grounds to themes taught in the Holt, Rinehart & Winston "Basic Readings" textbooks, designed for grades two through eight. They asked for alternative books — not censorship — and offered to pay for an extra teacher. School officials responded by saying, in effect: Abandon your religious principles or forget about a public education for your children.

The real issues concern basic disagreements over public education. Who should control a child's education, the parents or the state? What values should be taught in the public schools?

Judge Hull found that the readers push a clear ideological agenda, one that clashes with the parents' values. He wrote: "There is no question that the reading texts teach more than just how to read."

Troubling themes

After studying the Holt textbooks myself, I found many of the themes troubling. For example, some 35 stories show children lying or rebelling against their parents, with no negative consequences. Others promote pacifism, with no countervailing point of view. (This understandably offended the two plaintiff fathers who had served in Vietnam.)

Also, the Holt books either exclude or distort Christianity and Judaism. Out of 600 stories, none presents Protestantism of any stripe as a central part of any story, and only one concerns Roman Catholicism. Judiasm appears only once.

One story even has a major character stating confidently that Jesus could not read or write. Another says that King Solomon received his wisdom by talking to animals, like some Old Testament Dr. Dolittle. Several present American Indian religions, Buddhism and other faiths, but precious few discuss Christianity or Judaism. The impression given is that these faiths are something exotic and foreign.

The readers also push a bitter feminism. One seventh grade story says that "the history of mankind is the history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man

toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her."

News reports of the Tennessee decision focused on the objections of some (but not all) of the parents to "The Wizard of Oz" being included in the textbooks. But the parents do not object to the Wizard of Oz story standing alone, but to the Holt textbooks' overall occultic themes.

The books not only include material on the occult, but they also ask children to write magical chants and play the role of a fortuneteller. If the Christian parents believe that sorcery and fortunetelling are demonic, aren't their objections understandable? If a reading exercise had children compose a prayer to Jesus Christ, this too would "stimulate imagination and creativity." It would also stir up objections.

Differing ideas

Some argue that conservative Christian children should be exposed to differing ideas through textbooks, because we live in a diverse world. I agree. But that argument does not apply to this case. These textbooks do not expose children to Judeo-Christian values. The editors plucked the textbooks bare of biblical or traditional American thought. Separation of church and state does not mean that children shouldn't read anything about the role of religion in American life. They should encounter a whole spectrum of ideas, not just a slanted, skewed selection.

Critics argue that if any religious group can opt out of material if dislikes, public schools will descend into chaos. But "opting out" already occurs frequently. Many schools split off slow learners, Cambodian refugees, and others from regular classes without major difficulty.

And public schools even accommodate religious distinctions. Allowing Jewish students to refrain from singing Christmas carols at a choir concert shows thoughtful tolerance, not a feckless vulnerability to religious disruption.

Judge Hull's decision limits the possibility of such disruption by placing the financial burden of paying for the alternative program on the parents involved. Children may opt out of the Hawkins County reading classes, but their parents must pay for any different program.

The court also ruled that all children must still learn how to read. The objecting families may teach reading at home, but they must comply with all state requirements, including standardized testing of their children.

As one indebted to public schools for my own education, I am troubled by statements that this lawsuit threatens their independence. If public education must inevitably foster some set of moral values, then it must recognize the constitutional rights of parents to freedom of conscience, to petition their school officials, and to opt out if they are denied satisfaction. That is truly the American way.

Jordan Lorence is a staff attorney for Concerned Women for America. Used by permission of the Wall Street Journal.

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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The Crowder suit

Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

The state-owned cross

The displaying of a cross on a state office building during the Christmas season raises some sticky questions, especially since the American Civil Liberties Union has challenged the concept.

The state is displaying the cross on the Sillers Building in downtown Jackson as a Christmas reminder. The ACLU maintains that such a display in a state-owned office building puts the state in the posture of promoting Christianity, since the cross is a symbol of Christianity.

The state's attorney general, Ed Pittman, advised going on with the display, saying he will defend it, according to news reports.

The cross is being displayed by turning on lights on the east side of the building in such a fashion as to leave the cross visible at night.

The ACLU says it would be all right if the state displayed Christmas trees and ornaments.

I say it would be all right, too, if the state displayed Christmas trees and ornaments — IF — it also were able to display a cross if it so desired.

Regardless of what we feel about the state being able to promote Christianity, and I agree that it should not be able to do so, we must all agree that Christmas is a Christian observation.

If the state is going to indulge in any kind of observance at all, it might as well be able to use displays denoting the Christian character of the observance.

If the state should not be allowed to do that, then the only alternative would seem to be to cut out any kind of observance. That would mean no Christmas holiday for state workers. Surely even the non-Christians would not like that approach to the matter. They like the holiday whether or not they have an interest in the reason for it.

The ACLU has said it is all right to display secular material in observance of Christmas. But Christmas is not a secular observance.

If the entire population were to take part in the observance of a Jewish holiday, we would expect to see Jewish symbols in place as decorations. If we were to observe some sort of Mormon holiday, we would expect to see pictures of Joseph Smith.

I would just as soon not have the cross on the Sillers Building. I can observe Christmas very well without it. And I doubt that it is serving as much of a witness to a lost world. If it caused one soul to be saved, I would have to say that it would be worth it. But we cannot know that it would do that. Actually, the cross is more

related to Easter than it is to Christmas; but that is beside the point.

If we are going to observe Christmas at all, we should be allowed to have a cross on a state-owned office building. We don't have to have it there, but we should not be stopped from having it there if we want it.

The world has availed itself of our Christian holiday. The world should not be allowed to dictate how it is to be observed.

We must be careful, however, about our attitudes concerning such a situation as has been described. From news reports we hear such things as ugly telephone calls and picketing at the ACLU offices. Those things don't help at all. They really make matters worse.

It's not in the way of a compromise to suggest that it could be more practical to use the words "Joy" and "Peace" in the lights on the Sillers Building. Those words are more significant in observing the birth of Christ anyway. "Joy" and "rejoice" are found 18 times in Philippians. And the heavenly hosts announced the birth of Christ with the word "Peace."

Those words fit very well into the Christian Christmas spirit.

Bob and Julia Crowder of Alabama and their two friends, Henry C. Cooper of Missouri and H. Allan McCartney of Florida, have appealed their suit which was seeking to alter action taken in 1985 at the Dallas Southern Baptist Convention and which the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia refused to act on.

The Crowders and Cooper and McCartney are suing the Southern Baptist Convention and its Executive Committee.

In all due respect, it is a little bit ridiculous on the face of it. One would think that the Crowders, who have become very visible in Southern Baptist circles beginning with the convention in Pittsburgh in 1983, would be aware of that. There is no Southern Baptist Convention right now. The last one ended June 12 in Atlanta, Ga. The next one will begin June 16 in St. Louis, Mo.

The Southern Baptist Convention cannot be sued unless the plaintiff can manage to get his suit handled while there is a convention. In between sessions there is no convention. There is nothing, and one cannot sue nothing.

The Executive Committee can be sued; and, of course, that is the entity that is getting the brunt of this action. The Executive Committee, however, had no part in the problem that is worrying the Crowders.

The Crowders had wanted the federal court to interpret the SBC bylaws and to direct the SBC to comply with that interpretation and to vacate the 1986 SBC Committee on Boards, Commissions, and Standing Committees. It all started with the 1985 report of the Committee on Committees, which nominated the Committee on Boards that reported to the

1986 convention. An effort to change the report of the Committee on Committees was ruled out of order by then President Charles Stanley.

The judge has said he doesn't have any business interpreting the SBC bylaws; and if he did, he wouldn't be able to tell the SBC what to do.

Surely he is right.

Anyone can come up with their own interpretation of the bylaws, officially or otherwise; but no one tells the Southern Baptist Convention what to do. The convention decides that for itself. We may not all like some of the decisions that are made; but once they are made, only the convention can change them.

The courts of the land have no jurisdiction.

The Crowders have complained that they tried to get satisfaction through the channels of the denomination and failed. Their cause is lost. There is no other recourse.

Nevertheless, they have appealed.

Please, Mr. and Mrs. Crowder, call off your suit. You can't win it. There is no way to do that. You have made your point. Whether we agree or disagree, there is no change other than on the floor of the convention. What is happening now is creating more problems and solving none.

You simply cannot take away the convention's prerogative to decide on its own course of action.

If you think the president was unfair in refusing to recognize points of order, then you are free to work for the election of a president who you feel would more nearly represent your viewpoints. But it must be settled on the floor of the convention. The federal government cannot intervene.

If it were to do so, our Constitution would have been violated; and we would be living in a dictatorship.

Guest opinion

A new look at an old problem

By Joe Stovall

The old problem is that alcohol, the befuddling drug, is still with us after these many years. The last century was known for its crusades challenging alcohol usage and rescuing alcoholics. Temperance societies were organized and thousands of people went "on the wagon." The twentieth century has had its crusaders, too. Alcoholics Anonymous came into its own with an ever-spreading reformation. National prohibition came and went with protests from people on both sides of the fence. Here in Mississippi, local option elections changed the situation somewhat, with liquor out in the open.

Viewing the popularity of alcohol in the U.S. and the attending problems related, thoughtful Christians see an old problem ever renewing itself. As long as the profit motive is behind the making, distribution and sale of alcohol, the problem stays. Cultural and social views do not alter this drug's use. People's attitudes toward it simply have not changed, nor have people changed.

Let us see some basic ideas about man that are relative to the continued

usage of alcohol. First, God made everything in the beginning and he pronounced his creation good. With creation came a stewardship, a trustee arrangement whereby humankind became caretakers of all that God made. From that beginning, also, came the desecration of creation and of man who was made in God's image. The fall's damage is found in the Apostle Paul's words that tell of all people as "obeying the impulses of the flesh and the thoughts of the mind . . . our cravings dictated by our senses and our dark imaginings . . ." (Eph. 2:3, Amplified New Testament) All people are involved in this common plight. The human condition is appalling, considering the total effect of man's choices. Today, we relate alcohol, as many people use it, to putting something above God. The result may be destruction of a person's health, wrecked relationships and damage to society.

Some alcoholics have been known to change as a result of a "renewal of the mind," to use New Testament terminology. It is, indeed, a spiritual experience when a person recognizes

that he is powerless to change in and of himself and that he is saddled with an idol on his back. This person then comes to a willingness to listen, not to the physical craving of the body or the psychological craving of the mind. This person is ready to hear God's call within himself, a call to authentic wholeness, humanity, responsibility, and freedom. This new look at an old problem certainly includes redemption that is utterly transforming in nature and not intellectual alone. The varied helping professions of our time enable people to know themselves

better, to accept responsibility for themselves, and to be able to deal with failure without pretension. The church has a definite ministry of pastoral care as the church reaches

out in loving concern to persons and their families who are caught in the trauma of alcoholism.

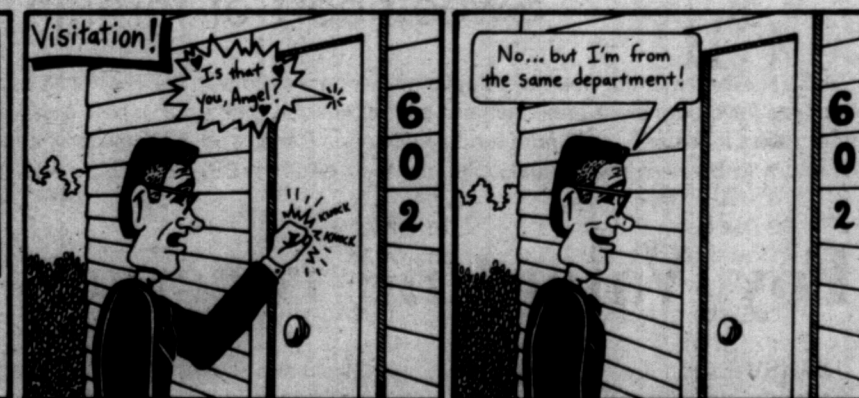
Joe Stovall is a chaplain at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center.

It also is the first Greek grammar

in any of Yugoslavia's languages to use a self-study method.

The 330-page book, titled "The Greek Language of the New Testament," was released in October by a Catholic publisher in Zagreb. It will be sold throughout the country in both religious and secular bookstores.

Joe Stovall is a chaplain at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center.



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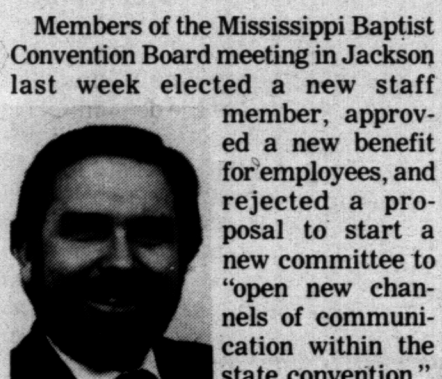
JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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Board hires Tompkins, adds employee benefits

By Tim Nicholas



Tompkins

The new staffer is Randy Tompkins, who began Dec. 10 as the consultant for preschool and children's work in the Sunday School Department.

Tompkins, 40, comes to the convention board from 18 months operating Cornerstone Consultants, a private Sunday School growth firm in Oklahoma. Prior to that he was minister of education and administration at First Church, Jenks, Okla., where he served from 1980-85. He held a similar post at First Church, Ada, Okla., 1979-80, and was minister of education at Emmanuel Church, Enid, 1976-79; Memorial Church, Tulsa, 1974-76; and was minister of education/youth at Hampton Road Church, DeSoto, Tex., 1972-74.

Earlier, Tompkins held staff positions in music, education, and youth work at Westlen Church, Dallas; First Church, Bethany, Okla.; and First Church, Alva, Okla.

A graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, Tompkins earned the master of religious education degree from Southwestern Seminary.

Tompkins is a native of Elk City, Okla., and is married to Marlene Bengs Tompkins. They have three children: Keli Denise, 13; Kristin Dean, 12; and Kara Dian, 10.

Through Cornerstone Consultants, Tompkins has already done growth work on Mississippi's Gulf Coast and in Jones County. He will have additional responsibilities in training leadership for Vacation Bible School work.

The new employee benefit will be dental insurance, which will be paid by the board at \$8.86 per employee. Employees will pay for the cost of dependent coverage.

Additionally, the board approved a plan to begin in January to award a half percent of pay to each employee who completes five years employment with the convention board. An additional half percent will be given for each additional five years.

Employees will receive no cost of living raises in 1987.

The defeated resolution came from board member Leland Hogan of Lebanon Association. It read: "That the president of the convention board, in consultation with other board officers, appoint a committee to seek ways to open a new avenue of communication between the convention board, Baptist Building personnel, and the churches and pastors of the convention."

In discussion, Hogan, pastor of Carterville Baptist Church, Petal, said that "There is a feeling among many in Mississippi Baptist life that they do not have all the answers... I feel a frustration among many of the people that serve the churches."

Hogan said that unless new avenues of communication are opened, Mississippi Baptists "are going to see it very hard to increase Cooperative Program giving." He said some pastors are considering designating funds to the Foreign Mission Board because they feel "too much money

is being spent inside the state."

Donald O'Quin, board member from Tallahatchie Association said, "The solution to the problem is right here in this room." He said that the board members represent the various counties in the state.

James Carr, board member from Holmes County, said that the reason people don't have the answers is "they don't listen."

Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the convention board, said the biggest problem is communication and that improved methods would be welcomed suggestions. "If you can show us how, we are teachable." The motion failed by a wide majority.

The convention has been raising its percentage of Cooperative Program gifts sent outside the state since 1976 by a half percent a year to the 1987 amount of 36.5 percent.

Division of funds

Eddie Smith of the Mississippi Baptist Education Commission reported on the division of funds set by the convention and implemented by the commission. In 1987 the commission will distribute \$3,394,379 for operations and \$600,000 for capital funds to the three Baptist schools.

In total allocation of operations and capital expenditures, Blue Mountain College will receive \$510,036; Clarke will get \$244,658; MC will get \$1,958,947; and William Carey College will get \$1,213,994.

In other business, board members heard reports from the Education Commission, from Lewis Nobles, and from Frank Gunn, who was reporting for the Gulfshore Expansion Committee.

Lewis Nobles, president of Mississippi College, spoke to the board about the relationship of Mississippi College to Clarke College. Some Mississippi Baptists, he said, had raised questions about the formula for distribution of the 30 percent of higher education funds. That formula year by year cancels Clarke's share at three percent a year, until 1991, when the entire 30 percent will go to the three colleges. Clarke, being a branch campus of MC, will no longer receive separate administrative funds.

"That's about as fair and equitable a way" of getting at the allocation as possible, said Nobles, referring to the general funding formula, which primarily bases distribution on the

(Continued on page 7)



Executive Committee officers

These are the new officers of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Executive Committee. From left they are Ingram Foster, layman, Prentiss, vice chairman; Bill Duncan, pastor, First Church, Booneville, chairman; and Larry Otis, layman, Tupelo, secretary.

Peace Committee adopts foundational statements

By Dan Martin

ATLANTA (BP) — Two statements which will provide the "foundation for reconciliation" in the Southern Baptist Convention — one on theology, the other on denominational politics — were adopted by the SBC's Peace Committee during its 10th meeting in early December.

Chairman Charles Fuller said the two statements "form the basis for reconciliation" in the nation's largest non-Catholic denomination, which has been involved in political and theological controversy for more than seven years.

Fuller, pastor of First Baptist Church, Roanoke, Va., said the two statements were "hammered out" by the 22-member group during an "intense" meeting. He added they will form the basic foundation for the committee's report, which is expected to be unveiled in preliminary form at the

Feb. 16-18 meeting of the SBC Executive Committee in Nashville, Tenn.

The Peace Committee was created at the 1985 annual meeting of the SBC and charged with responsibility for discovering the sources of the controversy, making findings and then recommending possible solutions. It must make its final report at the 1987 annual meeting of the SBC, June 16-18, in St. Louis.

The "foundational" statements, Fuller said, came about as the committee "struggled with just what it is wanting to accomplish... what it is supposed to do."

"I had come out of the prayer retreat (at Glorieta, N.M., in October) feeling we had moved well along in theological reconciliation and were ready to move right into reconciliation having to do with politics. We had sug-

(Continued on page 8)

Police to present case in missionary murders

By Marty Croll

SANNIQUELLIE, Liberia (BP) — Police were to present their case Dec. 6 in Sanniquellie, Liberia, against the man who has admitted the murder of a Southern Baptist missionary and her daughter.

Investigators were to tell a Liberian grand jury sitting in the Nimba County courthouse why Benjamin M. Morris, 32, should come to trial next month in the murders of Libby Senter and her 10-year-old daughter, Rachel.

Key evidence includes written and recorded confessions that resulted after missionary George Senter told Morris he forgave the man for killing his wife and child and asked Morris to confess.

In the confession, Morris said he committed the murders after Mrs. Senter intervened to prevent him from molesting her daughter. Morris,

a Liberian the missionaries had befriended, had worked around the Senters' home Nov. 25 before coming back that night to ask for a place to sleep.

Brown said Morris, a 1979 graduate of Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary, wrote his confession in flawless English for the joint security office in Yekepa, a mining town in northeastern Liberia where the Senters live.

Morris was apprehended Nov. 27 at a checkpoint about 20 miles from the Liberian border, the day after he allegedly stabbed Mrs. Senter and Rachel.

When arrested he was wearing Mrs. Senter's tie-dyed shirt and George Senter's blue jeans and was carrying shorts and shoes from the

(Continued on page 10)

NOBTS sets extension classes at MBS in Jackson

NEW ORLEANS — The schedule of classes has been announced for Term III for the Jackson, Miss., extension center of New Orleans Seminary.

All courses are accredited for the master of divinity, master of religious education, and associate of divinity degree programs.

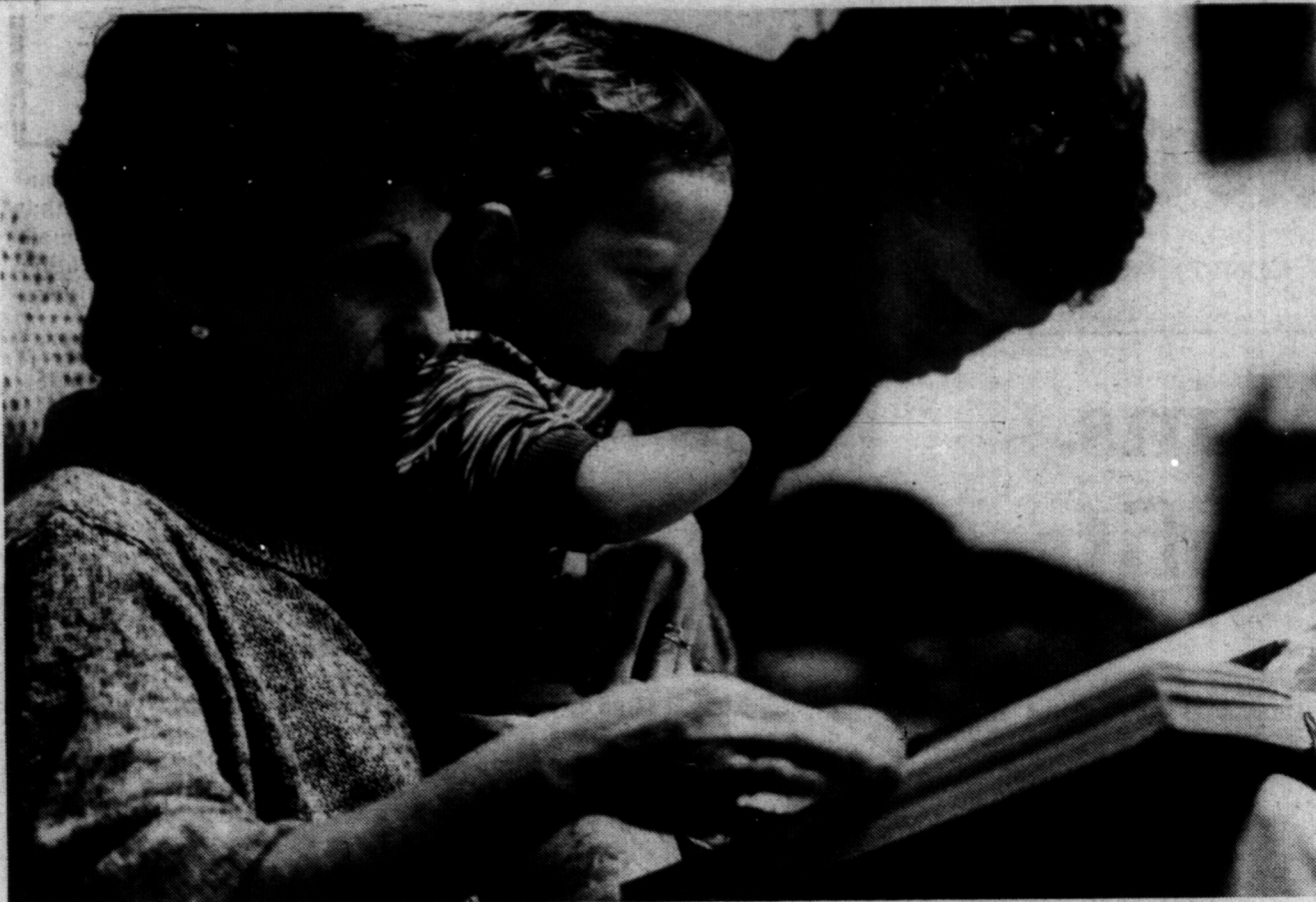
Registration will be Monday, Jan. 19. Classes will meet Jan. 19 through March 12 at Mississippi Baptist Seminary on Lynch Street in Jackson.

Master's level courses offered during Term III will be "Preaching" (1-5 p.m. Mondays), and "Introduction to

the New Testament" (6-10 p.m. Mondays).

Associate level classes meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Courses offered will be "Introduction to the Old Testament" (8:30-10:30 a.m.), "English Composition" (10:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m.), "Introduction to Southern Baptist Missions" (6-7:50 p.m.), and "General Math" (8-9:50 p.m.).

For more information, contact the Registry Office, New Orleans Seminary, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, La. 70126.



Philip Newberry, 2, his mother, Jan, and brother, Joey, 13, look at a photo album of Brazil where they plan to return in mid-January, along with Philip's father, Randy, and sister, Amy, 15. Philip lost his hands and feet after meningitis caused

gangrene while the family was on furlough this year. The Newberrys will leave Gordon, a Texas town of 516, and go to Sao Paulo, comparable in size to New York City, where Randy will help start new churches. (BP) PHOTO by Stanley Leary.

Newberrys will return to Brazil in January

By Eric Miller

GORDON, Texas (BP) — A dream to be back on the mission field by Christmas will come true only a few weeks late for a Southern Baptist missionary family.

Randy and Jan Newberry, both 36, and their children, Amy, 15; Joey, 13; and Philip, 2, plan to return to Brazil in mid-January after the two older children finish their school semester. For them, it is a culmination of many miracles and countless prayers.

Their emotional roller coaster ride began March 27 when Philip was diagnosed as having meningitis. Doctors doubted he would live, but a miracle occurred and he did. The Newberrys told doctors that people around the world were praying for Philip.

Meningitis caused poor circulation in his extremities, and that resulted in gangrene. A distinct line marked the boundary between living tissue and dead, dark, plastic-like tissue. Doctors amputated his hands and feet at that line.

Five weeks after the amputations, doctors at Children's Medical Center in Dallas became concerned about an infection developing in Philip's arm.

They decided to give him an antibiotic to which they knew he was allergic. An earlier dose had caused a rash, but this time he had a severe reaction.

Seventy percent of his skin sloughed off, and he developed pneumonia.

Doctors attached pigskin to Philip's body and his skin started growing back. Within two weeks he was recovering, marking another miracle.

Eventually Philip was fitted with

artificial legs, and one more miracle occurred when he walked without crutches. Doctors told the Newberrys they had never seen a bilateral amputee — missing both legs — walk without crutches, and Philip is a quadrilateral amputee. Again, they told doctors people around the world were praying.

Seeing their son walk across the stage at Glorieta (N.M.) Conference Center during Foreign Missions Week in August fulfilled their first dream.

After Philip walked across that stage, the Newberrys said, "Our next dream is that we'll be back in Brazil by Christmas." But school schedules intervened, and it will be early January before they leave Texas for Brazil.

Their first term was in Natal, Brazil, where Randy was a religious education consultant. Now he will coordinate small-church development in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Randy firmly believes it is God's will for them to return to Brazil, even though staying in the United States would appear to be easier.

Classmates are begging Amy and Joey to stay in Gordon, Texas, and Philip could get more convenient medical treatment in the United States. Once a year Philip must be brought back to the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Crippled Children in Dallas for doctors to check his arms and legs. He also will have to go to a Sao Paulo clinic about every six months to be fitted with new prostheses as he grows.

The Newberrys have deep roots in Gordon. Randy moved there at 13

when his father became pastor of First Baptist Church. Jan was born there. They met at Gordon High School and got married at 18. Jan's family lives in Gordon, and Randy's family lives 30 miles away.

All of Gordon knows about Philip's brush with death, said the Newberrys' pastor, Bill Wright of First Church. Students prayed in school for Philip, as did civic clubs and churches.

The Newberrys are popular at school. Classmates this year selected Amy as the "cutest girl" in the school and Joey as "class favorite" for the eighth grade. Amy is on the drill team, and Joey plays football for Gordon Junior High. Randy has been teaching a Wednesday night Bible study for youth, many of whom are his children's classmates.

During the crisis time, Randy, Jan, and William Gaventa, the physician who directs medical services for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, sat together Easter morning as Philip lay injected with nine intravenous tubes, catheters in his stomach and chest, and respirator and feeding tubes.

Doctors doubted Philip would live another day. The three cried together. Gaventa regained his composure and told Randy and Jan, "Whatever happens, God is going to take care of you. His grace will be sufficient for whatever the day holds no matter what that day holds."

In Philip's case, prayer brought about a miracle that goes beyond medicine.

Eric Miller writes for the FMB.

Devotional

Loving You

By Ed McDaniel

"Faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love."

A well meaning church member once shared with me "that he was going to love me as long as I did right." That's great "stuff," right? Right on track! The sad commentary about this statement is that it reflects the thought of many of our "good church going folk." Henry Drummond's question, "How many prodigals are kept out of the kingdom of God by the unlovely characters of those who profess to be inside?" is a sobering thought.

What the world needs to see and hear coming from the church today is this great, uncolored message from God, "For God so loved the world that he gave." Somehow we need to share with those around us that God does not love us because: we are white Anglo-Saxon Baptists, nor does he love us because we are good and go to church each Sunday and give generously. The truth of the matter is that God loves me because of who he is, not because of who I am. That's great! The Bible says that while we were sinners, far from this loving God, far from being what he wanted us to be, many times doing things that were not right, God still loved us. He still cared for us.

If the world is to be different, if the church is going to be and to do what God wants us to, we are going to have to lay "it" on the line for the Lord. We've passed the building, talking, and excusing stage. We are right down to the lick-log. God wants us to "so love," as he has loved the world: Let's be used of God and let's start right now!

Ed McDaniel is pastor, First, Richland.

Medical Center sets candlelight service

Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson is holding a candlelight memorial service on Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 7 p.m. for parents who have lost an infant as a stillborn or newborn death. The service will be in the John Busey Auditorium on the subway level. Since holidays are especially difficult for bereaved parents, this special service is for those who need to express feelings they may have during this time. For more information call Linda Hodges at 968-1020.

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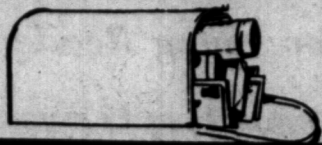
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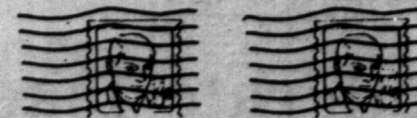
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Letters to the editor



Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances, and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Only signed letters will be used, but the writer may request that his name be withheld.

Prayers of Baptists

Editor:

I am very appreciative of the participation of the messengers and guests who attended the recent Mississippi Baptist Convention in Jackson. There is no way to measure the amount of praying that took place prior to our gathering in Jackson. We earnestly prayed for a genuine worship experience and that the conduct of our messengers might exemplify a loving spirit as business matters were conducted. Our Lord blessed us in these ways; and, hopefully, we are a thankful people.

I am deeply grateful for the privilege of serving as president in this second term. Certainly I solicit prayer support as I serve in this capacity this final year. I also want to suggest, that Mississippi Baptists begin, even now, to pray for the November, 1987, convention. There is no reason for us not to experience a sweet spirit each year if we will just make the right commitment and be a praying, cooperative people. I earnestly request that Baptists join me as we pray throughout this year for God to give us another helpful Pastors' Conference and Mississippi Baptist Convention when we gather next year.

Frank Gunn
President,
Mississippi Baptist Convention

Senter's Mississippi ties

Editor:

I am sure you will have picked up the story of the tragedy in Liberia either from the Baptist Press or the Foreign Mission Board.

George Senter, whose wife and daughter were murdered, has family ties in Mississippi. His father, the late Rev. Alfred M. Senter, was a native of Mississippi and grew up in Tupelo and Fulton. Alfred was a brother of my wife, Jacqueline, and also of R. L. Senter, Jr., Fulton, and Mrs. Ruby S. Roden, Booneville. He served for many years as a pastor in Tennessee and Virginia. I thought you might like to have this information.

W. L. Compere
Morton

Time to write

Editor:

I have wanted to write to this paper for sometime, but God had never led me until tonight.

I was reading the letters to the editor, and an article entitled "Thanks for Care" caught my eyes. So much has happened in my life in the past six months. I received Jesus Christ in my heart May 27, 1986, Tuesday night. I went from that night bolder than before, praying for the baby inside of me. The doctors said there were problems, but God kept saying pray, and so I did. Oct. 5, 1986, on my 24th birthday, our only son, Adam Clark Neal was born and died. Our church, in turmoil, confusion, and an uproar by this time was now in a

down hill state. But this didn't stop 48 people, from the hours of 2 a.m. and 9:40 p.m. to go to the hospital on Oct. 5, 1986, to pray and rebuke Satan.

Now I am and will always be God's child and bound for Gloryland, but Adam has gone on now. Our church, once on fire for God, is now split. People who (aren't bearing fruit) are gloating over the split, and seem to still be looking for more destruction. And God has now called our pastor away from teaching us his Word. The article "Thanks for Care" is aimed at those people who helped and do care, but mostly to God who is still caring. My prayer is that God will open the eyes of people so that they can care. II Chronicles 7:14 says, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

Sandi T. Neal
Houston, MS

Jesus didn't fail

Editor:

This letter refers to the report of Charles Carter's sermon at the convention.

The theology which can produce the statement that "Jesus failed" and hold man's will as an effectual barrier to God's will would justly alarm a host of Baptist greats in the past. Today it passes as pious devotion and a supposed encouragement to us in our failures.

Jesus never believed he failed. All that the father gave him came and will come to him (John 6:37), and he lost none of them (John 17:12). Indeed, he accomplished everything his Father gave to him to do (John 17:4).

Since we have forsaken the great doctrines of man's depravity and inability and God's sovereignty and Christ's effectuality and the Holy Spirit's power in salvation, it is little wonder that a preacher will grasp at absurdities and seek to impute failure even to Jesus. As for me, I believe that the gates of hell never prevail against the decreed and effectual purpose of God in making powerful the gospel to rescue sinners he has chosen from the jaws of death (Matthew 16:18, 19).

Tom Nettles, Ph.D.
Mid-America Seminary
Memphis

Funding female pastors

Editor:

On Oct. 8, the members of the SBC Home Mission Board voted not to give future financial support to any woman who is pastor of a local church. We, the members of Northside Baptist Church, Clinton, received this news with deep disappointment.

Our disappointment is twofold: first, we are disappointed that a majority of the board members hold this view and, secondly, that this board made discrimination against women a formal policy.

Northside Baptist Church has had ordained women deacons for several years, believing that pastoral and ministerial leadership is a gift of God without regard to gender. Moreover, we defend the traditional Baptist principle of the autonomy of the local church, and we are aware that there are other churches which do not concur with our view of the ordination of women.

Yet, we also believe that this decision seriously hinders this autonomy, both in theory and in practice. Therefore, we, the members of Northside Baptist Church, urge the Home Mission Board to reconsider its decision in light of our shared belief in the autonomy of the local church and in an attempt to foster a spirit of peace within our troubled convention.

Mark McComb
The Mission Action Committee
Northside Baptist Church
Clinton

BMC ministerial students

Editor:

We hear the pros and cons of Blue Mountain College. The school has served a worthy purpose in the past and can have a glorious future. Having served for over 18 years as the pastor of First Baptist Church in New Albany, which is 12 miles from the campus. I can testify of what I have seen, heard, and experienced.

I believe that we must not lose the college, for it serves a worthy purpose in God's Kingdom here on this earth. The leaders of Blue Mountain College are dedicated to educating young women and men and are to be commended.

I do want to address some things that should be known concerning those who attend the school as ministerial students. In the five county area joining the college, 38 churches are pastored by students or alumni of the college. In the 15 county area, 42 percent of the pastors are students or alumni of the college.

Blue Mountain College has produced some of the finest men to be found anywhere. The men who attend the school are under the influence of good and solid Bible teachings. They deserve the best that Mississippi Baptists can give them.

A fact-finding committee has found deplorable conditions for the young ministerial students who seek to live in Blue Mountain, and attend school.

Fact No. 1: That all of the houses which house ministerial students are in the worst sort of repair. They would be declared unliveable by most standards. These houses have little or no maintenance.

Fact No. 2: It was suggested that a new building be built on the Lane pro-

perty across from the campus at a cost of \$150,000.00. This is not feasible. Who would maintain the new facility if built?

Fact No. 3: There are already more than enough existing facilities to house the ministerial students on the campus. Why not use them?

William F. Evans, pastor
State Boulevard Church
Meridian

Thank you for these observations. A committee of the ministerial alumni at Blue Mountain College was appointed last April to look into the situation which you have described. The committee completed its work in September and presented its findings to the board of trustees in October. The trustees in turn appointed a committee to study the matter and report back. President Harold Fisher told the Baptist Record that the alumni committee gave him a copy of the report. A complicating factor is that if the ministerial students were to move on the campus, Blue Mountain

would in fact become a coeducational school. And that is a matter that would require a charter change, making it a convention decision rather than a trustee decision. — Editor.

James Fondren dies

James A. Fondren Sr., of Taylor, retired minister, died Nov. 18. Services were held on Nov. 20 at Waller Funeral Home, Oxford. Services were conducted by Clarence Young, La., and Don Stanfill, director of missions, Lafayette and Marshall Associations. There were 12 pastors present who served as honorary pallbearers.

He is survived by his wife, Willie. He served 36 years in the ministry in North Mississippi, retired from Taylor Church, Lafayette Association, Oct. 5, 1986. He was born Dec. 21, 1914.

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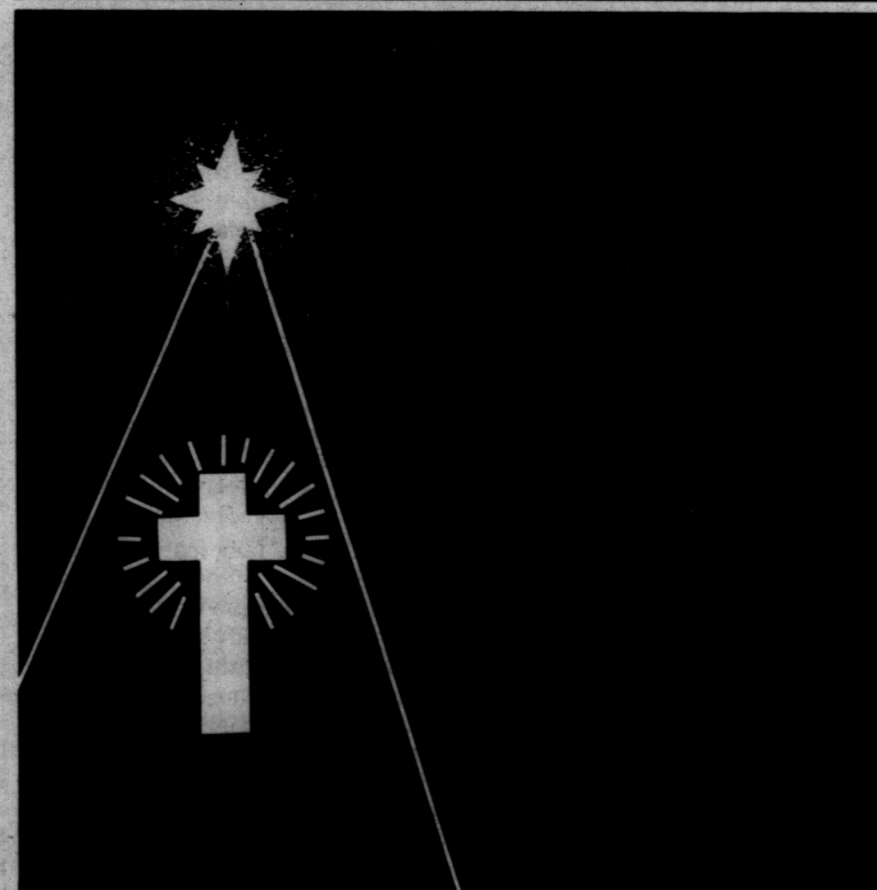


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Moderate leadership 'dismayed' by rejection

By Marv Knox

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Moderate Southern Baptist leaders have responded with "sadness and dismay" to what they describe as rejection of their proposals for peace in the beleaguered denomination.

Norman Cavender, Winfred Moore, and James Slatton offered a "moderate-side proposal" for Southern Baptist Convention peace in late October. Their action followed the six Southern Baptist seminary presidents' Glorieta Statement, a peace document of philosophical statements and commitments presented to and affirmed by the SBC Peace Committee in Glorieta, N.M.

Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas, is a former SBC first vice president and was the moderate candidate for convention president the past two years. Cavender, a layman from Claxton, Ga., and Slatton, pastor of River Road Baptist Church in Richmond, Va., presented moderate concerns to the Peace Committee's subcommittee on denominational politics this summer.

Cavender, Moore and Slatton's peace proposal urges that moderate leader Cecil Sherman, who resigned the Peace Committee, be replaced with a "clearly, openly and completely identified moderate leader," the SBC Forum and Pastors' Conference be united into one non-political meeting; SBC President Adrian Rogers appoint sitting presidents of the Southern Baptist state conventions and state Woman's Missionary Union organizations to the powerful Committee on Committees; fundamentalists "stand down" on political organizing and both sides refrain from partisan politics; Also they asked that the Southern Baptist Advocate stop attacking SBC institutions and their employees; both SBC factions get together to choose an agreeable candidate for SBC president in 1988, or 1987 if Rogers does not seek reelection; the Peace Committee convene a peace conference to refine the proposal; and fundamentalists respond immediately to the proposal.

Slatton told Baptist Press that Rogers responded with a letter dated Nov. 10.

"Dr. Rogers specifically dealt with only one of the proposals — the one dealing with the appointment of the Committee on Committees — which he rejected," he said. "The other seven were ignored completely. Dr. Rogers made no offers whatever which would dismantle the political polarization of the presidential elections, committee appointments and annual pastors' conferences."

Slatton added that fundamental leaders Paige Patterson, president of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, and Paul Pressler, a Houston judge, also wrote letters rejecting the proposal. The moderates' proposal was sent to Rogers, Patterson, and Pressler, as well as members of the Peace Committee and the SBC Executive Committee and the six seminary presidents.

Noting they feel "both sadness and dismay," Cavender, Moore, and Slatton issued a brief joint statement:

"We continue to believe that acceptance of the eight proposals by both sides will bring peace to this convention, and we urge Dr. Rogers and the rest of the fundamental-conservative leadership to reconsider their position."

"We are deeply disappointed that Adrian Rogers has rejected our proposals to end the controversy in the SBC," Cavender said. "Now that the seminary presidents have acted to address the concerns of the fundamentalists, we hoped the other side would be willing to solve the problems of convention politics. Our proposals were an effort to eliminate that conflict."

"The task of genuine peace requires a two-way street. It requires give and take from both sides," Cavender insisted. "Moderates have been willing to give. But fundamentalists still seem willing only to take. As long as that attitude dominates, peace and fairness are impossibilities."

Marv Knox is Baptist Press feature editor.

Pinedale preacher needs heart transplant donor

By Betty Jo Stewart

Clarence Cooper, longtime Union County Baptist preacher, needs a new heart.

His name has gone on the national computer as the search for a donor heart will begin. The transplant will be done at the University of Alabama Hospital in Birmingham.

He and his wife, Clara, who now live at Pinedale, have gone to Gardendale, Ala., just a 20-minute drive to the hospital, where they will be staying at the home of friends. Mr. and Mrs. George Howard, to wait for a donor heart.

Cooper, 58, was forced to leave the pulpit a year ago when he had a heart attack, a myocardial infarction. He was pastor of Duncan Hills Church. The doctors told him he was a sudden-death survivor. This type of attack often results in immediate death. Heart problems appear to be hereditary for Cooper. Two of his brothers had heart attacks and died immediately.

God wasn't ready for me to die," he said as reflected on what has happened to him and this new venture that awaits.

Cooper wasn't interested in getting a transplant until about three months ago when his heart began to deteriorate. "I know that I am slowly dying. If I can get a heart and get an extension on my life and be of service to the Lord I want to," he said.

For 22 years he was pastor of Bethel Baptist in Union County and for a year and a half was pastor of Enterprise Baptist Church.

The Coopers' two sons are preachers. Clarence Cooper Jr. is pastor of the Immanuel Baptist Church in Grenada and Charlie Cooper is pastor of First Baptist

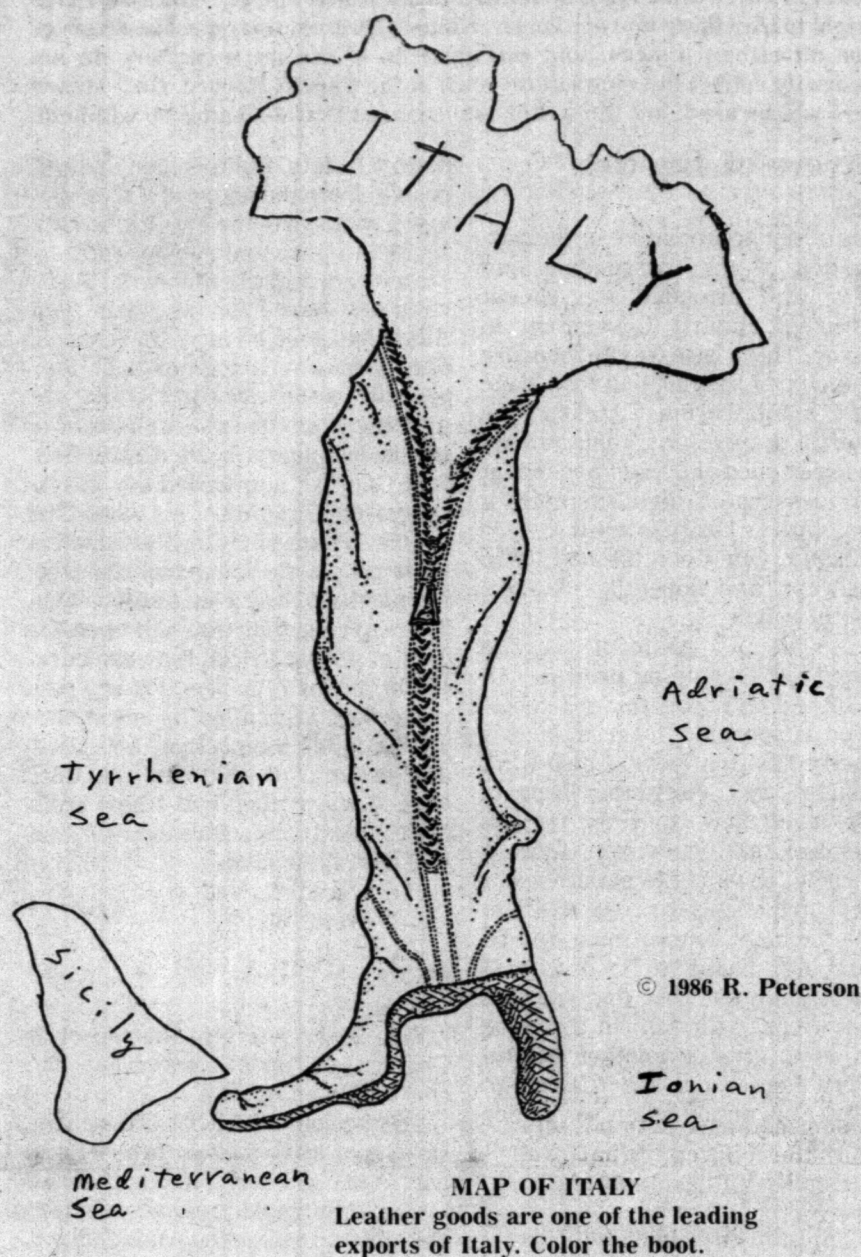


Hope for the future

This Indonesian woman had little or nothing when the Indonesian government moved her and her family from the crowded island of Java to less crowded, but isolated Lampung province on the eastern tip of Sumatra and provided them land and part of a house. Southern Baptist missionaries Wendell and Betty Smith put their energies into ministering to transmigrants like this woman. "Bottom line?" says Smith. "I want everybody to be a Christian. And I want them to stand on their own two feet." (FMB) PHOTO BY Joanna Pinneo

GEOGRAFUN: (For Young Readers) Nations and Imaginations

By Ralph C. Peterson



© 1986 R. Peterson

Attention: Church treasurers

Church treasurers are reminded that the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Business Office will close its books on Dec. 31, 1986. Gifts received in Jackson by the 31st will be counted on the 1986 church giving year. Monies received after this time, even though mailed in December, will be counted on the 1987 church giving year. Early mailing of December gifts may avoid possible confusion in annual reports.

A man in his early thirties told his minister: "No one in the world loves me, not even my wife, or my children," he said. If he was expecting a flood of sympathy he must have been surprised when the minister asked, "Do you deserve to be loved?" Then he went on to explain that it isn't the person, himself, that people love, it is the qualities he possesses — kindness, unselfishness, fairness, thoughtfulness, and similar qualities. He pointed out that a person adds qualities of this kind to his life, people's love for him increases; as they are subtracted, love fades. This was a new and sobering thought for the young man, who left the minister with quite a different outlook on life. Most of us never stop to consider whether we have traits that inspire love. We ought to! — The Little Gazette



PARTIAL MAP OF EUROPE (Turn Sideways)

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Ralph Peterson, creator of Geografun, may be addressed at 1200 S. Washington St., 627 E. Alexandria, VA 22314.

Missionaries to France are inveterate Lottie fans

By Tim Nicholas

"We are inveterate Lottie Moon fans," says Hal Lee, veteran Southern Baptist missionary to France with his wife Lou Ann.

The couple, on short furlough until Dec. 28 in Long Beach, took time to talk about their work and what the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions means to them.

After World War II, American and Southern Baptists "took certain responsibilities in Europe for helping European Baptists rebuild," says Lee. French Baptists asked Southern Baptists in 1959 to appoint a couple to work in English language churches growing around military bases.

"Again and again you can take the map of France, go down the line, and this church and that church have had capital gifts granted for construction through Lottie Moon," says Lee. "Our strategy has been to try to serve with the missionary presence, but also through capital funding because property is so horribly expensive."

"Lottie preceded us," says Lee, who, with Lou Ann, has been in France for 24 years. For instance, Antony church, in a Paris suburb, was funded with Lottie funds. Lee recounts that the Antony pastor, "a real go-getter" phoned him to tell that the municipal government had agreed to put up a sign for the church. What was mounted called it "something like St. John the Baptist church," says Lee.

Lee believes some official decided on his own to interpret the church name to conform with his ideas — about 75 percent of the French are Roman Catholic, though only about eight percent attend services.

The second largest group in the country is Muslim with only about a million Protestants.

French Baptists number about 4,000 in 80 churches and missions. "France itself is some ways is pioneer," says Lee, who is pastor of a 25 member church in the Massy suburb of Paris. Massy has about 45,000 residents with three Catholic parishes, a Lutheran church, Jewish synagogue, Moslem place of worship, and one other Evangelical church besides the Baptist church.

Fifteen of the Baptist churches in France are in the Paris area which the Lees say is a difficult area to work in. "The big word is simply indifference," says Lee. "People are not concerned with organized religion. Most are not opposed to it, they just do not see any great need for it."

Lou Ann says that being born into a Catholic family "equates Christianity to the average French person. You don't ask a person if he's a Christian — they'll all tell you they are."

Hal Lee is pastor of an international church with about 90 in attendance and only about 25 members. He says the Europeans are more reserved about commitment than the Americans. And there are a number of people who attend who are transients, only in the country temporarily. About 25 of the participants are Haitians who are in the country as refugees, and who have developed a



Hal and Lou Ann Lee, missionaries to France, sit in the First Church, Long Beach, missionary residence with their French dog George. The Lees are 24-year veterans of French foreign missions.

strong bond with Hal Lee.

The recent Billy Graham crusade in Paris has brought 17 referrals to Lee's church. While the couple are on furlough — until Dec. 28 — a committee is enlisting the referrals in Christian nurture groups in a serious followup. When they go back "we have a real challenge in developing rapport with the new converts," says Lee. Lee replaced a French pastor who was called in 1980 to a self-supporting church. Lee was invited by the French themselves to be pastor.

The church meets in the Baptist Center, which is operated by the French Baptist Federation. Some of the ministries of the center were begun with Lottie Moon funds, such as the recording studio and the first printing press there. The second and third presses were bought by the facility itself, which prints all the federation's Sunday School literature, tracts, study course materials, the Baptist newspaper, and a French edition of Decision magazine. "We were able to give them a start and they've gone with it," says Lee. There are five fulltime employees and the operation is able to work from manuscripts to finish book or newspaper.

A language school operated there

was the reason for Lou Ann starting and directing a child care program. She also teaches Sunday School and is assistant organist at the church.

Growth is slow, the Lees explain, but that is no reason for retrenchment. "The FMB is committed to the world, not just to where there is a great response," says Lee. "And you don't switch missionaries around like you change lightbulbs."

"Missions is a career investment. People go to follow through the incarnational witness to the land to which they believe God has led them," he says.

Lou Ann Lee says the satisfaction is in "knowing that you're where God wants you to be."

Her husband adds, commenting on the idea of growth following planting, "A missionary plants himself in his work."

Many good resolutions start too late and end too soon.

Borrowing neighbors usually take anything but a hint.

Nothing makes it harder to find a hiding place than having children.

Thursday, December 11, 1986

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 7

Faces And Places

by anne washburn mcwilliams

Anne McWilliams will resume her column, Faces and Places, shortly. Tuesday, Dec. 2, her husband, W. D., had lung surgery. As the Baptist Record goes to press, he is back in intensive care at Hinds General Hospital in Jackson. Anne said the morning of Dec. 9 that W. D. was improving, though he had developed pneumonia.

Board hires Tompkins

(Continued from page 3)

number of full time students enrolled at MC, Blue Mountain College, and William Carey College.

Nobles said that whether the separate funding of Clarke College will continue cannot be answered unequivocally until 1991, when MC undergoes re-accrediting procedures. He said that if the schools were completely merged with the name of Clarke disappearing, some of those

asking why is the bookkeeping separate, would ask why are they together. "Personally, I see it as a Catch-22 situation," said Nobles.

Frank Gunn reported that the annual flood insurance fees of \$850 would rise to \$174,450 if the convention builds the additions it has been planning at Gulfshore. He said that the expansion committee will have to reconvene and consider alternatives, such as self-insuring.

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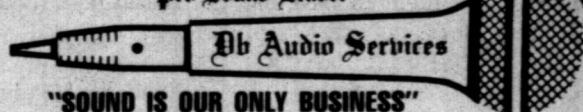
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Peace committee makes foundational statements

(Continued from page 3)

gestions from both sides of the house, but the committee felt something needed to be ironed out stating our basis for reconciliation," Fuller said.

The statement on the basis for theological reconciliation which the committee adopted says:

"It is the unanimous conclusion of the Peace Committee that the cause of peace within the Southern Baptist Convention will be greatly enhanced by the affirmation of the whole Bible as being not errant in any area of reality."

"Therefore, we exhort the trustees and administrators of our seminaries and other agencies affiliated with or supported by the Southern Baptist Convention to faithfully discharge their responsibility to carefully preserve the doctrinal integrity of our institutions receiving our support, and only employ professional staff who believe in the divine inspiration of the whole Bible and that the Bible is 'truth without any mixture of error.'"

The statement picks up parts of three other documents: the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message Statement, in Article I, affirmed that the Scriptures are "truth without any mixture of error;" a 1980 SBC resolution exhorted "trustees of our seminaries and other institutions . . . to faithfully discharge their responsibility to carefully preserve the doctrinal integrity of our

institutions;" and the 1986 Glorieta Statement, made by the presidents of the six SBC-affiliated seminaries, affirmed "the 66 books of the Bible are not errant in any area of reality."

The Peace Committee's "foundational statement on the basis for political reconciliation," mirrors the theological statement, Fuller said. The statement says:

"It is the unanimous conclusion of the Peace Committee that fairness in the appointive process will contribute to peace."

"Therefore, we exhort the present and future presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Committee on Committees and the Committee on Boards to select nominees who endorse the Baptist Faith and Message statement and are drawn in balanced fashion from the broad spectrum of loyal, cooperative Southern Baptists, representative of the diversity of our denomination."

Fuller said after the "foundational" statements were adopted, the committee moved into consideration of nine specific recommendations concerning political activity, presented by the five-member political activities subcommittee, chaired by Peace Committee Vice Chairman Charles Pickering, an attorney from Laurel, Miss. (See related story)

The recommendations, like the "foundational" statements, will be

passed on to a six-member subcommittee that will draft the final report of the Peace Committee.

Fuller named William Poe, an attorney from Charlotte, N.C., as drafting subcommittee chairman. Other members include Edwin Young, pastor of Second Baptist Church, Houston; Jerry Vines, co-pastor of First Baptist Church, Jacksonville; William Hull, pastor of First Baptist Church, Shreveport; Daniel Vestal, pastor of First Baptist Church, Midland, Texas; and Albert McClellan, a retired denominational executive from Nashville.

Fuller said the "foundational" statements and recommendations do not mean the committee has completed its work on political activity. "We are by no means finished with the subjects relative to denominational politics," he said, adding that politics "is now the area where we feel we need to concentrate most in preparing our recommendation to the convention."

"The political activities subcommittee said they have received numbers of requests, some of which have been on file for months, along with those submitted by (moderate leaders) James Slatton (of Richmond, Va.) and Norman Cavender (of Claxton, Ga.). Some of those proposals will be the basis for the recommendations that will come," Fuller said.

He added that some of the proposals call for radical revision of convention governing principles, structures and procedures, such as ones calling for a major change in the way appointments are made to the key Committee on Committees and another which would change the method by which convention presidents are nominated and elected.

"The committee is reluctant to recommend radical changes in the structure, procedures, and policies which have been workable in the convention for so long," Fuller said. "The circumstances in which we find ourselves demand that we address sources of our division, but we must be careful that any changes we suggest have long-term benefits to Southern Baptists, not just expedient benefits."

He indicated the final report will include a number of recommendations in the "do and don't category" of politics within the convention. He added he has said all along there will be politics in the Southern Baptist Convention, and the task of the Peace Committee will be to help sort out the bad politics from the acceptable politics.

In his remarks concerning the December meeting, Fuller praised James Flamming, pastor of First Baptist Church of Richmond, Va., who has been elected to the Peace Com-

mittee, succeeding Cecil Sherman, pastor of Broadway Baptist Church of Fort Worth, Texas, who resigned following the October meeting.

The chairman said the committee has set three additional meetings: Jan. 8-9, 1987, in Dallas; Feb. 18-19 in Nashville, Tenn.; and April 2-3, also in Nashville.

Fuller added: "Despite the reactions of some to the Peace Committee's call for restraint and lowered political rhetoric, we are still convinced the best atmosphere in which to work for reconciliation is one not charged with overt political activity. Those with vested interests on both sides of our denominational house may disagree or even be cynical about it. Opinion is their privilege, but the committee has an assignment to carry out."

SBC taskforce tackles AIDS-related issues

By David Wilkinson

DALLAS (BP) — A distraught mother comes to the pastor and explains her son has informed her that he is a homosexual and that he has AIDS. What does the pastor say to her?

Word gets out that a child in the church nursery has been tested positive for the AIDS virus. What does the church do?

An active member of the church is terminally ill. The rumor is that he has AIDS. How does the church respond?

These and many other related issues were explored by a Southern Baptist taskforce on AIDS, which met Nov. 17-18 in Dallas.

The meeting, convened by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, brought together a cross-section of pastors, agency representatives, social workers, and healthcare leaders to discuss ways churches can deal with the growing AIDS problem.

AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) attacks the body's immune system, leaving the victim defenseless against deadly "opportunistic" diseases. More than 26,000 persons in the United States have the disease.

Perhaps 10 times that many have AIDS Related Complex in which the virus and symptoms are present without the opportunistic infection or malignancy of "classic" AIDS. Addi-

tionally, an estimated one to two million people have not exhibited symptoms but are carriers of the virus.

While the nation's homosexual community has been the most seriously affected, healthcare experts are expressing growing concern about movement of the virus into the heterosexual population.

In response to the problem, taskforce members focused on three key roles of churches and their pastors: education about AIDS, prevention of high-risk activities which can lead to AIDS, and ministry to AIDS victims and their families.

"In terms of prevention, education is the most important thing you can do," said William Sutker, an infectious disease specialist at Baylor University Medical Center who has treated more than 80 AIDS cases. "This is a devastating disease, but we must be careful to present the facts rather than contribute to the hysteria."

In ministering to AIDS victims and their families, pastors "will have to get past the origins of the disease and realize that these are human beings who are dying," said William E. Amos, pastor of First Baptist Church of Plantation, Fla. "I believe homosexuality represents a sinful lifestyle, but that does not mean I can abandon the person who is suffering the consequences of his behavior."

David Wilkinson writes for the Christian Life Commission.

J. C. Hawthorne dies

Funeral services were held for J. C. Hawthorne, 69, Scott County, Nov. 7, at 2 p.m., from Ott & Lee Chapel in Forest. Danny Moss, Ricky Gray, and Dan Thompson officiated. Interment was in the Rehobeth Cemetery in Rankin County.

Hawthorne passed away Thurs., Nov. 6, at St. Dominic Hospital in Jackson. He was a resident of Sand Ridge Community (Scott Co.), for 26 years. He had pastored churches in Scott, Attala, Choctaw, Oktibbeha, Tishomingo, and Franklin counties since 1949. He was serving as pastor of Homewood Church (Scott Co.), at the time of his death.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Annie Lee Hawthorne; two sons, James Charles (Chuck) Hawthorne, Randy Hawthorne, both of Lake; one daughter, Mrs. Jimmie Lynn Shoemaker, Lake; three brothers, Wilbur Hawthorne, John Hawthorne and Sammy Hawthorne, all of Richland; three sisters, Mrs. Annie Bell Harrell, Shreveport, Mrs. Aline Patrick, Forkville, and Mrs. Lena Mae Stewart, Pelahatchie; three grandchildren, Miss Donna Hawthorne, Mrs. Amy Hollingsworth, and Mrs. Tonya Harrison, all of Lake, and a number of nieces and nephews.

Along with everything else, the facilities for getting into trouble have been improved.

Many a public speaker who rises to the occasion stands too long.

It would have been better for some self-made men if the job had been done by someone else.

I know of no way of judging the future but by the past. — Patrick Henry

Staff Changes

James Dykes, former minister of music at Clarke-Venable Church in Decatur, has recently accepted the position of associate pastor with responsibilities in music, education, and youth, at Christ Church in Houma, La. Dykes is married to the former Linda Fortenberry of Wesson, and they have two sons, Jim and Joseph.

Jim Phillips is the new associate pastor and minister of education at Calvary Church, Tupelo. He was formerly pastor of Mt. Olive Church in Meridian.

Brooksville Church, Noxubee Association, has called Levon Moore of Kosciusko to serve as interim pastor. Moore, whose home is in Kosciusko, recently retired as director of missions for Attala Association. He succeeds Carlis Braswell who has just been called as pastor of French Camp Church, Choctaw Association.

Billy Odon has resigned as pastor of Lula Church, Hinds/Madison Association, effective December 14.

Spring Hill Church (Copiah) has called Estus Mason as interim pastor. Mason resides in Crystal Springs and retired from First Church Crystal Springs after 24 years of service.

Fortune truly helps those who are of good judgment. — Euripedes

Fortunes made in no time are like shirts made in no time; it's ten to one if they hang long together. — Douglas Jerrold

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Just for the Record



Children and youth of Raymond Road Church, Jackson, sponsored "Trick-or-Treat So Others Can Eat," Oct. 31. They collected 12 boxes of food and delivered it to the Crestwood Baptist Center, Nov. 4.

Pictured are the participants.

Music Ministry of Trace Ridge Church, 238 E. Lake Harbour, Ridgeland, will present the 3rd Annual Christmas Pageant, Dec. 14, 6 p.m., and Dec. 15, 7 p.m. It is a full outdoor production entitled "Noel, Jesus Is Born." Families can view the program from their cars or seating is available near a bonfire. Lana Odom is director, and Jerry Odom is pastor.

This summer's Liberty Weekend brought a special title to a gospel singer. When ABC television used her recording of "The Star Spangled Banner" for the finale, the result was a rush of phoning to discover the identity of "the torch singer."

That singer, Sandi Patti, will perform in concert Dec. 12 at 7:30 p.m. at Jackson's Mississippi Coliseum.

She has earned two Grammy Awards, 13 Gospel Music Dove Awards, and has a Gold Record for "More Than Wonderful."

Sanctuary Choir of Thompson Church, Smithdale, will present their Christmas Cantata, "O Come Let Us Adore Him," Dec. 14, at 6:45 p.m. The choir is under the direction of Jon Daniels, minister of music and youth. Tim Seal is pastor.

Hebron Church, Eupora, had its first worship service in the new auditorium in October. The church has 30 enrolled in Sunday School.

Pictured, (left to right), front row, are Pee Wee Nickles, R. C. Lucius, Porter White, Bill Carson, and Carl Nickles, pastor. Back row, Bubba Burton, Buddy Freeman, and Arvis Stroud.



The adults and teen choir of Grandview Church, Pearl, will present "Repeat the Sounding Joy" cantata, Dec. 21, 6 p.m., and 7 p.m.

The adult choir will be singing at MetroCenter, Dec. 15, 6 p.m., lower level in front of Sears.

Wade Chappell is pastor, and Lynn Weems is minister of music.

First Church, Mendenhall, will present a Live Nativity Scene, Mon., Dec. 15, on the front lawn of the church. There will be two presentations, the first one will be at 6 p.m. and the second one at 7:30 p.m. Stan W. Fornea is pastor.

Homecomings

Cherry Park, Clinton (Hinds-Madison): Dec. 14; 11 a.m.; church-wide dinner; afternoon service, guest musical group; Jerry File, former pastor, guest speaker; Hollis Alderman, pastor.

Phillipston (Leflore): Harvest Day; Dec. 14; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship service, 11 a.m.; Donald Toomey, Brandon, former pastor, guest speaker; lunch served in youth center; afternoon service, special music; Charles Griffin, pastor.

Elton Moore dies

Elton Moore, 64, pastor of Barefoot Springs Church, Pelahatchie, died in his home in Morton, Dec. 3. Burial was at Springfield Church, Morton, cemetery.

Moore, a graduate of Clarke College and Mississippi College, earned the master of religious education degree from New Orleans Seminary.

He is a former pastor of Cash Church, Scott County; Russell and Oak Grove Churches in Meridian; Walnut Grove Church, Leake County; and Bethel Church and Castlewoods Churches in Rankin County.

He was a missionary to Indonesia and was public relationship director at Clarke.

Moore was preceded in death by a son, Lowry Reese Moore.

He is survived by his wife, Jean Cooper Moore; brothers, Ewell C., and W. Levon of Kosciusko, J. Kelva of Newton, Ned of Mayfield, Ky., and W. Mark of Brandon; sisters, Mrs. Lou Ella Tucker and Mrs. Nettie Jones, both of Brandon, Mrs. Eva Moore of Shreveport, and Mrs. Nell Godwin of Newton; and several nieces and nephews.

Memorials may be made to the Lotie Moon Christmas Offering, the Arthritis Foundation, or the Patient Education Program at Mississippi State Hospital.

Edward McMillan, vice president for Graduate Studies and Special Programs at Mississippi College, has been chosen as one of 25 participants nationwide to receive an expense paid trip to the University of Miami's 1987 Winter Workshop at Lake Buena Vista, Fla. The week-long conference, under the general heading "International Scientific Forum on Fueling the 21st Century: Today's Decisions for Tomorrow's Needs," will deal specifically with the topic, "Enlightenment: The Best Security in a Nuclear-Armed World." The conference is underwritten by the Alfred P. Sloane Foundation. McMillan was reportedly one of more than 200 applicants.

Maudie Albritton Fielder, who spent 35 years as a Southern Baptist missionary to China, died Nov. 27 in Houston, Texas. She was 94. Mrs. Fielder, a native of Bazette, Navarro County, Texas, served with her husband, the late J. Wilson Fielder, in Honan Province, first in the city of Kaifeng and then in Chenghsien (formerly Chengchow). She worked with Sunday schools and missionary organizations in local churches and did evangelistic visitation in the homes.

Names in the News

Sardis Lake Church, Panola County, ordained two deacons, Calvin Keeon and Paul Britt, Oct. 26. Sam Dodd was also elected active deacon.

Sardis Lake Church had 99 in attendance on high attendance day. There have been 12 additions by baptism and letters.

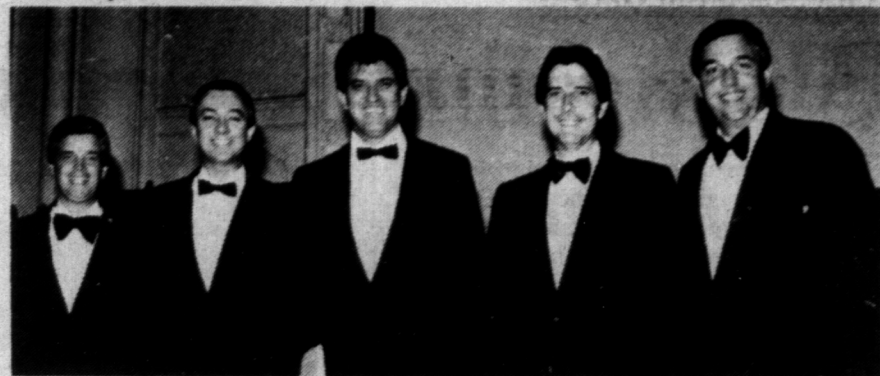
Jack Demoney is the new pastor of Sardis Lake Church. Demoney, his wife, Rosie, and their daughter recently moved from Northside Church, Greenville.

A reception will be held for Mr. and Mrs. I. L. Hill for their 50th wedding anniversary, Dec. 13, from 1:00-3:00 p.m., at 140 Trey Circle, Pearl.

I. L. Hill is retired, but available for pulpit supply. He can be contacted at Rt. 3, Box 262P, Coffeeville, MS 38922, or call 226-9360.

His former pastorates include Ephesus Church, Scott County; Providence Church, Bolivar County; and New Hope Church, Yalobusha County.

Stan Ballard and his wife, Beth, will be honored by a reception, Dec. 14, 2-4 p.m. at Chester Church in Choctaw County, where he has been serving as pastor for five years.



Singing Churchmen officers

These are the officers of the Mississippi Baptist Church Music Conference. From left they are Chris Jenkins, president, minister of music at First Church, Gautier; Frank Stovall, vice president, chairman of the music department at Mississippi College; Dot Pray, secretary-treasurer, keyboard specialist with the Church Music Department, MBCB; and Dan Hall, ex officio, MBCB Church Music Department director. Officers not pictured are Ken Miller, president-elect, minister of music at First Church, Natchez; and Franklin Denham, Singing Churchmen representative, minister of music at Highland Church, Meridian.

NEW SCHEDULE FOR ACTS

SATELLITE NETWORK, INC.

CDT	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6:00	Changed Lives	Vegetable Soup	Villa Alegre	Sunshine Factory	Carrasco-Lendas	Infinity Factory	Moody Science
6:30	One in the Spirit	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	Family Foundations
7:00	Catch the Spirit						Sun School Lesson
7:30	This Is The Life	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Davey and Goliath
8:00	Christopher Closeup	Joy of Music	Gloria	Word of Life	Music Is	First Things First	Sunshine Factory
8:30	Westbrook Hospital	Country Crossroads	Great Churches	In Concert	Great Churches	Invitation to Life	Gigglesnot Hotel
9:00	In Touch						Shippy/bush Kangaroo
9:30	Joy of Music	"Que Pasa"	Bill Cosby	Shari Lewis Show	Mickey Rooney	Rebop	Lone Ranger Cartoon
10:00	Gloria	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Cisco Kid
10:30	Profiles	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Our World
11:00	At Home With the Bible	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	In Concert
11:30	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	
Noon	The Baptist Hour	Vegetable Soup	Villa Alegre	Sunshine Factory	Carrasco-Lendas	Infinity Factory	Country Crossroads
12:30	Prime Timers	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Sunshine Factory	Jimmy Houston
1:00	Psychiatry and You	Psychiatry and You	Psychiatry and You	Psychiatry and You	Psychiatry and You	Psychiatry and You	Super Handyman
1:30	Sunday Selection	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	Plant Groom
2:00							David Wade
2:30	Great Churches	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Davey and Goliath
3:00	Joy of Music						Sunshine Factory
3:30	Gloria	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	*Sgt. Preston of the Yukon	Gigglesnot Hotel
4:00	Profiles	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Country Crossroads
4:30	At Home with the Bible	Villa Alegre	Sunshine Factory	Carrasco-Lendas	Infinity Factory	Vegetable Soup	Jimmy Houston
5:00	This Is The Life	Bill Cosby	Shari Lewis Show	Mickey Rooney	Rebop	"Que Pasa"	Shippy/bush Kangaroo
5:30	Christopher Closeup	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Lone Ranger Cartoon
6:00	Westbrook Hospital						Cisco Kid
6:30	Changed Lives	Gloria	Word of Life	Music Is	First Things First	Joy of Music	Our World
7:00	One in the Spirit	Great Churches	In Concert	Great Churches	Invitation to Life	Country Crossroads	In Concert
7:30	Catch the Spirit						Moody Science
8:00	Sunday Selection	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	Family Foundations
8:30							Sun School Lesson
9:00	The Baptist Hour	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	This Is The Life
9:30	Prime Timers	Bill Cosby	Shari Lewis Show	Mickey Rooney	Rebop	"Que Pasa"	Christopher Closeup
10:00	Changed Lives	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Westbrook Hospital
10:30	One in the Spirit	Gloria	Word of Life	Music Is	First Things First	Joy of Music	Our World
11:00	Catch the Spirit						In Concert
11:30	This Is The Life	Great Churches	In Concert	Great Churches	Invitation to Life	Country Crossroads	Super Handyman
12:00	Christopher Closeup						Plant Groom
12:30	Westbrook Hospital	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	David Wade
1:00	The Baptist Hour	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Moody Science
1:30	Prime Timers	Bill Cosby	Shari Lewis Show	Mickey Rooney	Rebop	"Que Pasa"	Family Foundations
2:00	Changed Lives	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Life Today	Sun School Lesson
2:30	One in the Spirit	Gloria	Word of Life	Music Is	First Things First	Joy of Music	Shippy/bush Kangaroo
3:00	Catch the Spirit						Lone Ranger Cartoon
3:30	This Is The Life	Great Churches	In Concert	Great Churches	Invitation to Life	Country Crossroads	Cisco Kid
4:00	Christopher Closeup						
4:30	Westbrook Hospital	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	
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4:30	Westbrook Hospital	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	
5:00	The Baptist Hour	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	Encore Theatre	
5:30	Prime Timers	Bill Cosby	Shari Lewis Show	Mickey Rooney	Rebop	"Que Pasa"	

*Effective Week of November 23

+Effective Week of December 7

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Slain missionary's friends grieve at services

At home

By Erich Bridges

SHELBY, N.C. (BP) — Family and friends in the United States came together Nov. 29 to try to understand the life and violent death of Southern Baptist missionary Libby Senter and her 10-year-old daughter, Rachel.

Observed by reporters, television cameras and a community in shock, they quietly gathered at Zion Baptist Church in Shelby, N.C., the home ground that nourished Senter. Her father preached there for 16 years, and she first dedicated her life to missions there.

Current pastor Russell Fitts remembered the last time the missionary family had been in the church, 11 months before.

"Rachel and Philip came with Libby and George to stand where I'm standing," and the entire family took part in a presentation on missions in Liberia," Fitts remembered. "You

could tell by the way these children, Philip and Rachel, came to the rostrum and held the banners and posters that they were thrilled to be a part of what their mother and daddy were doing."

The missionary and her daughter were found murdered early Nov. 26 at the Senter home in Yekepa, Liberia. Police arrested suspect Benjamin M. Morris, a graduate of the Liberian Baptist Theological Seminary, the following day as he apparently was trying to escape the country.

The characteristics that turned up most often in memories were her love of people and sensitivity to their needs.

"It didn't make any difference whether somebody was 80 or eight or one," said Libby's 87-year old father, Bill Tarlton. "She was especially fond of children and of old folks. She'd just go see all the old people around here, and take food or flowers or whatever we had to send 'em, and stay out with 'em till she had to come back."

She carried that concern for people

to seminary, where she studied ministry through social work. She supported herself there by working at a mental institution and later worked for a year among poor coal mining families in the mountains of eastern Kentucky.

In the mountains, Mrs. Senter once wrote, she "found overwhelming human need, few community resources and people reluctant to use available resources." A grandmother once brandished a pistol and threatened to shoot the young social worker if she tried to teach her granddaughter anything else. But the year helped seal her conviction that God could use her in missions. She married George Senter soon after.

Perhaps the most heart-rending recollections of the missionary came from Hilda Dean, a nurse in Louisville who developed a 20-year friendship with Senter during seminary days. Dean visited Senter in Liberia for a month in 1984 and planned to go again next February. She had earlier planned to call the missionary Nov. 29 to

finalize plans for the upcoming visit. "She was the best friend I ever had," Dean said through her tears. "She wanted to be where she could serve and help people. She couldn't bear the suffering of the people. I'm a nurse, and she would say, 'Hilda, there's a lot of people out there with a lot of needs. Let's get out there and help them.'"

"The people loved Libby. They went to her if they had problems. They went to her if they needed something. They loved her. You could see it in their eyes."

The missionary wanted desperately to speak the difficult Mano language fluently, Dean said, so she could communicate the love of Christ effectively.

"She wanted to learn to pray in Mano." The last communication Dean received from her friend was a cassette tape. On it, Dean related, Senter sounded as excited as always. "I want to live," the missionary said. "I've got so much I want to do. I can't wait for you to come."

Missionaries and Liberians were gathering around George and Philip at the Senter home in Yekepa at the same time the Shelby service was going on, said John Mills, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's director for West Africa. The next day, Nov. 30, the bodies of Libby and Rachel Senter would be buried there. George's brother, Fred Senter, said the missionary couple had long ago decided they wanted it that way — in case either died on the mission field — "as a witness" to the Liberian people.

As the people filed out of Zion Church in Shelby, Bill Tarlton stayed behind and spoke of George Senter. The missionary had met face to face with the suspected killer of his wife and daughter, Tarlton had been told, and had told the murderer he forgave him.

"I haven't got that far yet," Tarlton said quietly. "I might one day, too. I don't know."

Erich Bridges writes for the FMB.

Overseas

By Marty Croll

YEKEPA, Liberia (BP) — Thousands of Liberians streamed into Yekepa, Liberia, three days after the murder of Libby Senter to tell each other why they felt the Southern Baptist missionary was one of their own.

Mrs. Senter, of Shelby, N.C., and her daughter, Rachel, 10, were stabbed to death in their Yekepa home Wednesday morning, Nov. 26. A Liberian, Benjamin M. Morris, 32, admitted to the murders two days later.

The Liberians paid tribute to Mrs. Senter during a wake, funeral, and burial on the grounds of Mount Nimba Baptist Church Nov. 29 and 30. They told of her willingness to identify with them by learning their language and staying overnight in their homes as she worked with her husband in surrounding village

churches.

A procession of people from the Mano and Gio tribes accompanied the caskets containing the bodies of Mrs. Senter and her daughter as Liberians carried them out of the city's hospital morgue. The tribal people walked alongside the caskets for more than a mile.

"This was really a Liberian funeral, and it would please Libby because she was so close to the people," said Liberian Johnetta Minor, president of Ricks Institute, a Baptist school located in Monrovia.

Liberians started arriving at the church from throughout Nimba County for a wake lasting from 7:30 p.m. Nov. 29 until about 4 the next morning.

They eventually packed the sanctuary and spilled outside onto church grounds and under a brush arbor. About 3,000 people attended the funeral service from 2:30 to nearly 5 p.m. Nov. 30, watching as the bodies were buried atop a little knoll by the church.

Among Liberians attending the funeral were Walter D. Richards, president of the Liberia Baptist Missionary and Education Convention, with which missionaries work; Charles Blake, convention executive secretary; William E. Stewart, one of the most prominent figures in Liberian Baptists' partnership with Georgia Baptists; and Victoria Dukuly, president of the convention's Woman's Missionary Union.

Forgiveness was one topic the Liberians discussed widely among themselves. They were stunned as word got around that George Senter had placed his hand on Morris' shoulder, looked the accused murderer in his eyes and told him he forgave Morris for killing his wife and daughter.

"That's a story that just amazed everybody in the area," said Bradley Brown, the administrator of the 67 Southern Baptist mission workers assigned to Liberia.

Senter's ability to turn away anger

and forgive Morris so amazed some people that they did not know what to think, and at the wake some talked as if the murder might have been God's will, Brown said.

To balance this, Brown's funeral sermon explained that children of God are to hate evil, and that the murder was done "not by the will of God but by the wicked will of a wicked man under the power of wickedness." Further, he reminded the crowd, the seeds of evil in every man's and woman's heart will grow into evil deeds if they are allowed to do so.

"But even in the presence of wickedness, which is not our Father's perfect will, we have the assurance that he is working in all things for his glory and for our good," Brown said. "He is with us and is going to get the ultimate victory."

Liberians poured out their appreciation for the Senters and other Southern Baptist missionaries working throughout Liberia. "This was seen and heard and felt during both

the wake and funeral," Brown said. Nearly all of the Southern Baptist missionaries on the field in Liberia, about 50, traveled to Yekepa for the weekend.

One village pastor told the crowd with great emotion how his people had given her a name in the Mano language which meant "second," indicating she was only the second woman from outside their tribe who had tried to learn their language.

One contributor to the wake spoke of the daughter, Rachel, noting in her tribute Rachel's identification with the country. A teacher at the African Bible academy Rachel attended in Yekepa told about Rachel's answer to an assigned question, "How do you know you are a Christian?"

The teacher quoted Rachel as saying she knew she was a Christian because as she believed in Jesus Christ as her Savior, her "heart felt satisfied" — a phrase typical of Liberian speech.

Marty Croll writes for the FMB.

Police to present case in missionary murders

(Continued from page 3)

Senter home, Brown said.

Missionary Earl Williams discovered the bodies in the Senter home Nov. 26. Brown, notified in Monrovia, made the four-hour drive to Yekepa and spent most of the next six days alongside Senter working with police and making necessary arrangements.

Mrs. Senter and her daughter had been dead since between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. Williams found them later in the morning. Senter had driven to Monrovia Nov. 25 to pick up their 15-year-old son, Philip, so the family could celebrate an American-style Thanksgiving holiday together in Yekepa.

Monrovia's leading newspaper, the Daily Observer, covered the funeral service Nov. 30 and published a story and a series of photos. The Observer planned to publish the full text of

Brown's funeral sermon.

Senter and his son are scheduled to leave Liberia Dec. 17 for a month-long furlough in the United States. They will arrive in Greensboro, N.C., Dec. 18, but plan to return to Liberia Jan. 19.

Two days after the funeral Senter drove his son back to Monrovia, where he attends American Cooperative School. The next day the missionary returned to his work and the Yekepa home his family has lived in for six years.

Senter told Brown one of the hardest things for him had been passing Rachel's empty room and missing her customary good-night kiss.

Before he left Yekepa Dec. 1, Brown took a few minutes to talk with Morris, who attended the Liberian seminary during the time Brown was seminary president. Morris told Brown he had repented for the

murder and made peace with God.

"He seemed very remorseful, no arrogance, no expression of that kind of hatred," Brown said. During his confession, Morris had indicated he didn't want to live after what he said he had done, Brown added.

Morris grew up in the Monrovia area with guardians and later moved to Yekepa, where he attended Vocational Training Institute for an education in electrical work. While Morris lived in Yekepa, Earl Williams baptized him and helped him get into seminary.

Morris put his electrical training to use when he attended the Baptist seminary and graduated with a good academic record, Brown said. He accepted a job teaching at Ricks Institute in Monrovia, a school run by Liberian Baptists.

But Morris was dismissed from that position and later left another

position in a village church school. Both departures came after accusations concerning molestation of female students, Brown said.

Later, Morris told people he had experienced a change in his life and wanted to go back to Nimba County where he believed he could serve God.

Returning to Yekepa about six weeks ago, he contacted Williams. Williams tried to help him start a ministry as an itinerant evangelist and teacher in a Nimba County village. But because most of Williams' work centers around Yekepa, where he is pastor of Mount Nimba Baptist Church, Williams enlisted the help of Senter, who works with the village churches.

"Naturally Earl Williams and George Senter wanted to take him at his word, and they befriended him," Brown said. "Both were trying to help him."

Morris spent several evenings in the homes of both the Williamses and the Senters. But then Senter found him a place to stay in Redeemer Baptist Church about three miles away.

The day before the murder, Senter saw Morris on the road as the missionary drove by on his way to Monrovia to get his son. He considered stopping to tell Morris he would be gone and not to go to the Senter home, but he drove on. Morris did go to the Senter home, and he worked there that day washing windows until 4 p.m. He came back later saying he needed a cooking pot. At 11 p.m. he returned a third time. Mrs. Senter apparently let him in and — as the Senters had done in the past — allowed him to sleep in Philip's empty bedroom. The murders followed.

Marty Croll writes for the FMB.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COMMENTARIES

A miraculous healing produces controversy

By Marjean Patterson
John 9:1-12

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me; I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see!" This amazing grace was generously poured out on a man who had been born blind. Let's examine this marvelous account of one of the most familiar miracles of our Lord.



I. Jesus heals a blind man (John 9:1-12)

Jesus took advantage of every opportunity to model love and compassion in situations which seemed absolutely hopeless. Once as he and his disciples passed a man who had been born blind, the twelve wondered aloud about the origin of evil and suffering. In asking, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" the disciples reflected the idea commonly held that illness is connected with sin.

Though the parents of the blind man perhaps might have done something to produce blind-

BIBLE BOOK

ness in the unborn child, how could the disciples think the man had sinned in a prenatal state? After Jesus assured his listeners that suffering is not always the direct result of sin, he continued by performing a miracle of healing. Jesus gave something of himself as he mixed his saliva with the Judean dirt and applied the mud to the sightless eyes of the unnamed man. In a test of the man's faith, Jesus told him to go to the pool of Siloam and wash his eyes.

There was no healing value in the mud or in the water of Siloam but the man did as Jesus said to do. As the muddy water splashed on the ground around his feet, the man was able to see. What an exciting scene this must have been! When a man who had been born blind decided to follow Jesus' instructions, then he was able to see.

II. Parents of the healed man questioned (9:18-23)

When the Pharisees saw the healed man the next day, they asked him how he had received his sight. The formerly blind man repeated his

story to them and the incredible response of the Pharisees was anger over the fact that the healing had taken place on the sabbath. After further questioning of the man, the Pharisees decided to talk to his parents, in an effort to verify that he was their son and that he was born blind.

The people knew that anyone who acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah would be dismissed from the synagogue. This excommunication might mean a temporary withdrawal of religious privileges or it might be permanent. So it was easy to understand their fear when quizzed by the Pharisees. They suggested that their son was of age and that they should ask him what happened; he most surely would be able to speak for himself.

III. The healed man questioned and cast out (9:24-25)

The Pharisees spoke once more with the healed man. Trying to put words in his mouth, they wanted him to say that Jesus was a sinner. Though he did not know about the fine points of their theology, he knew one thing for certain, "Whereas I was blind, now I see!" They could stand and argue about theology and fume and

fuss. But they could not do away with his experience. Nothing can discount a first-hand experience.

IV. The healed man's faith in Jesus (9:35-38)

The Pharisees made good on their threat to throw the man out of the synagogue when he told them "If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

When Jesus heard about this mistreatment, he looked the man up and asked him one question — "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" The healed man had not ever seen Jesus. Perhaps he recognized the voice of Jesus. When our Lord identified himself, the man believed and worshiped him.

Jesus healed the physical blindness of the man in Jerusalem and gave a light to his life which would never go out. The Pharisees, the moral teachers of the people, were so blind that they would not see. As the songwriter wrote, "There are none so blind as those who will not see." And the real tragedy is that their unbelief persisted in the light of the full knowledge of the presence of their Messiah.

Marjean Patterson is executive director, Mississippi WMU.

From preaching to writing

Robert E. Self

I Cor. 15:3-8; Luke 1:1-4; John 20:30-31;
I John 1:1-4

The only Bible that the earliest Christians had was the Old Testament. It was not until A.D. 90 that the 39 books that we now have were given official sanction by a group of rabbis at Jamnia. While those Christians must have been inspired and guided by those books, they relied on oral traditions for their earliest teachings about Jesus.



Self

Eyewitnesses to the life of Jesus often told their stories to their families and friends. Two major events began to impress upon them the need to put the Gospel into a permanent form. Eyewitnesses began to die, and as they did so, the Gospel began to diminish in authenticity. Further, the church began to grow and spread beyond the places where the remaining eyewitnesses could easily go and testify.

During a period of time dating roughly from 25 to 60 years after the death of Jesus, the church began to write down the story. God took

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steps to preserve the theology of redemption for ages to come as "holy men of old wrote as the Spirit gave them utterance." The texts selected for today give us an overview of the Gospel event.

I. Foundational truth. I Cor. 15:3-4; John 20:30-31

Paul combines with John in these verses to set forth the very basic truths that are essential to healthy faith. Those truths center in the nature of all that Jesus was and did. The Gospels would narrate his life. Our text explains its importance.

Paul states that the central idea for preaching and teaching is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. It seems that the early church proclaimed these truths as primary to all faith. They just kept preaching about the cross and the fact that Jesus is alive again.

John adds two ideas. First, he tells us that part of the reason for the written word is to help us know that Jesus is the Christ. The world had

looked for a deliverer from God whom they called Messiah, "anointed one." We are told by John that Jesus is that One. The title "Christ" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew, "Messiah."

John also states that Jesus is the Son of God. A foundational statement of faith is that Jesus is God. Those events proclaimed by the church relate to the very Son of God.

II. Factual data. Luke 4:1-4; I Cor. 15:5-8

Paul is joined by Luke to tell us that the information about Jesus is reliable and trustworthy. When Luke set out to write his message, he consulted as many sources as possible in order to be accurate. (Luke 1:4)

Paul continues the plan by giving evidence for the incredible claim of our Gospel, namely, that Jesus was resurrected from the dead. Anticipating that many would find it difficult to believe, he states a powerful case by citing a number of witnesses who saw Jesus after the resurrection.

The writers of Scripture went to great trouble to be correct in the message. We can rely upon and believe the message because it has been accurately stated.

III. Functional faith. I John 1:1-4

The thrust of the move from the word of

mouth sharing by the early Christians to a written record is that men may accurately hear and believe. This results in a communion with God that produces life. John says that it's real!

Those who come to have life and fellowship with God through faith in Jesus Christ also have fellowship with others who have believed. That fellowship is best expressed in the church.

Conclusion:

All the accounts seen together tell us that Jesus is God, that he died for us on the cross, and that he was raised from the dead. Those who receive that truth by faith will be changed and will receive eternal life. Through fellowship with other believers they then are to share the Gospel with the world.

As we approach the time of year when we emphasize our offering for foreign missions, we ought to have a deep sense of responsibility to do all we can to get the Gospel out to the ends of the earth.

An eighty-year-old man whose grandfather was the first ambassador from Italy to Argentina recently said to me, "Guns do not bring peace. Only Jesus can do that. Go tell your people to send out the Gospel to the world."

Robert Self is pastor, First Brookhaven.

God's blessings for mission

By James W. Street
Genesis 12:1-9

Four thousand years ago the Sumerians had a highly advanced civilization. Sciences like astronomy, mathematics, and construction were developed to an unusual degree. Social services like a postal system and libraries have been found by archeologists. In that kind of society lived a man named Abram. He lived in a polytheistic culture where many gods were worshipped.



Street

In this pagan but religious environment — this cultured, advanced civilization — one day this man Abram told his friends, "I am selling everything I have and taking my family, my flocks, and my herdsman and going out to the north to a land I know not where." They, the friends, said, "Why are you

LIFE AND WORK

going?" Abram replied, "I don't know except God has spoken to me. And he has promised to bless me."

I can hear the friends yet: "He has gone crazy; He has become a religious fanatic! This leaving is absurd — to depart this high civilization, the center of the world, and go out there into the boondocks in answer to some kind of god that is talking to him." Can't you hear them?

Why did God call Abram out for this mission? Why was he chosen. Better yet why does God choose any person? It is apparent that God in various generations, at special times, has laid his hand upon some people. Why does God in his elective and selective process seem to touch some lives, and through those lives, the very streams of history and diverted?

Surely you know by now that God is always

looking for men, women, and children he can trust — people of faith, vision, and openness. If they, like Abram, will do that, he will come and show his power, strength, and blessing through them. And that, of course, is the answer to why God chose Abram and the answer to the generic question as to why God chooses any person.

Somehow as God's eyes went to and fro over the whole earth, he looked down and he saw one man who was more spiritually sensitive, whose heart was more open, who was more willing to receive his revelation and to do his will. Abram stood head and shoulders above others of his day because he was the one through whom God felt he could show his power, strength, and blessing.

This Bible we have is the story of how God continued in this kind of search for men, women, and children through whom he could work. He chose Jacob — old scheming Jacob who stole from his brother and lied to his dying father. But he was chosen above Esau

because there was an openness in him. He called Jonah, Isaiah, and Amos. The scripture is replete with this reference.

God spoke to Moses in the wilderness. Moses was not the most talented; he was not the bravest; he was wanted for murder — but God spoke to him out of a burning bush experience and said, "Come be my chosen vessel." Why? Because here was a man God could trust. His heart was open and ready to be God's man and the conduit for God's blessings.

The father did not stop dealing with people 2,000 years ago when the canon closed. He has continued, in every age, to come to the hearts of those who are open and ready to be led by him. It is true till today. The eyes of the Lord run to and fro over the world looking for the right folk. He still chooses the ones with the open heart and the willing spirit. Then he comes in and says, "Here is what you need (blessing) for the trip (mission)."

James W. Street is pastor, First, Cleveland.

Baptist Record

Missions issues explored via FMB teleconference

By Carol Garrett

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — The integrity of Southern Baptist hunger relief funds, the status of Christianity in China today, and current prayer needs were some of the topics Southern Baptists had the opportunity to discuss with missions agency leaders and missionaries during the Nov. 22 Foreign Missions Teleconference.

More than 106 calls were made during the live broadcast, which was seen over the Baptist Telecommunication Network and the ACTS Network.

Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks assured viewers that Southern Baptist dollars contributed for hunger relief in Africa had been well-used. Parks was in Africa last April.

"The money that was sent through Baptist channels got out to the people that it was meant to get to — volunteers and career missionaries. I saw (them) with my own eyes delivering it to the families that needed it," he said.

Less than one percent of Baptist-sent grain was lost through transportation, even over almost 1,000 miles of roadless territory, he added.

Parks also discussed urgent foreign missions prayer needs with Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union Executive Director Carolyn Weatherford and Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission President James Smith.

Today's thriving Christian church in China is evidence of Southern Baptists' most urgent prayer need, Parks said, noting, "One of the great needs of today is to pray for countries we call closed countries."

China, the first Southern Baptist foreign mission field, recently has become more open after 30 years of almost no contact with Chinese Christians.

In those 30 years, the 700,000 evangelicals have grown to somewhere between 3 million and 20 million, Parks said. Missionaries cannot go into about 70 countries in the world. "But prayers can go," he said.

Weatherford urged Southern Baptists also to pray for people in countries around the world where Christianity is considered a "western" religion. "I'm praying not only for closed countries, but countries where people's ears are closed to the gospel," she said.

Listeners also learned more people are becoming personally involved in missions by going as volunteers to many of the 108 countries where Southern Baptists do have missionaries.

Volunteering has "literally revolutionized their whole attitude about not only missions, but the importance of praying about it also," Smith said.

Still more volunteers are needed, Weatherford said. Missionaries had requested more than 12,000 volunteers

overseas this year, "and we probably will send only about 7,000," she reported.

Becky Ables, daughter of missionaries Ed and Linda Ables of Argentina, told viewers that, "More than anything I want people to realize that it's not just the career missionaries and the preachers and pastors that are responsible for being missionaries, but it's also the job of everyone."

In live studio interviews, telephone calls from around the world, and in taped messages, missionary after missionary talked about the great "harvest" possible on his or her mission field if more workers and more money were available.

The Foreign Mission Board budgets its entire Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal to meet the missionaries' priority needs. But the first priority met is sending all the missionaries who volunteer to go, Parks said.

If the \$75 million goal is not met, "we would take money away from capital and operating needs. We would send the missionaries, but with less tools to work with," he said.

Carol Garrett writes for WMU, SBC.

Annuitants get early gift for Christmas

DALLAS (BP) — Southern Baptists covered by their Annuity Board's church insurance program received an early Christmas present this year. Their December medical premium was free.

The Annuity Board refunded nearly \$3 million to 21,989 ministers and church employees or churches in November, according to statistics released by the board.

The free premium could mean an extra \$30 for an individual, or up to \$250 for a family of three or more.

The rebate was an incentive in last year's "open enrollment" campaign to get new people enrolled in the medical plan and reward current participants who were covered since January 1986. The campaign opened medical coverage during October and November 1985 to all eligible ministers and church employees who had been denied participation in any medical plan.

Some 6,000 people enrolled in the Southern Baptist medical plan, a board spokesperson said.

There is no point in crying, "peace, peace," if at the same time we reject the Prince of Peace.



Good to the last bite

World Hunger funds through the Foreign Mission Board help keep this little girl nourished enough to study at the Christian Education Center near Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Except for those who attend the program, most children who live in the area surrounding the center eat only a couple of pieces of bread a day. Such lack of nutrition leads them deeper into a cycle of poverty. Southern Baptists fund school feeding programs like this throughout Haiti. (FMB) PHOTO By Don Rutledge

"Boomers" return to fold

HARTFORD, Conn. (EP) — Older members of the "baby boom" generation are returning to churches and synagogues as they take on more traditional family roles and values, a new study shows.

"We are witnessing a resurgence of religious involvement as many of the prodigal sons and daughters of the 1960s return to more active participation," observes David A. Roozen, associate director of Hartford Seminary's Center for Social and Religious Research, who directed the study.

The study found 43 percent of people born from 1945 to 1954, now ages 31 to 42, reported attending worship services three or more times each month, up from 34 percent in a poll of similarly aged adults taken in the early 1970s.

The New York Times reported that Roozen believes the two principal reasons for the dramatic rise in religious involvement in a group that was known for rebellion in the 1960s are the growing number who have become parents, and growing political and economic conservatism.

"As people move into later stages of their life," he said, "they're looking to more stable, more lasting kinds of values, and they find the church supportive of that."

Roozen presented the study Nov. 16 at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and the Religious Research Association, held in Washington.

Roozen noted that "baby boomers" were influencing their houses of worship. "This generation is really strong advocates of participatory democracy and pastors are saying that younger people are demanding a voice, which is often upsetting to congregations and makes the pastor's life more stressful," he said.

First, Summit, to celebrate 125th year

First Church, Summit, will be celebrating its 125th anniversary, Jan. 15-18, 1987. Services will be held on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 7 p.m. Sunday services will be at 11 a.m., and 7 p.m.

Former pastors returning for this anniversary will be Tex Eldridge, who will preach at the Thursday night service, Dennis Johnsey at the Friday night service, Odean Puckett at the Saturday night service, Larry Fields at the 11 a.m. Sunday service, and Jerry Gunnells on Sunday night.

Leading the music will be Curtis Brewer, former minister of music.

There will be special memory displays in the Christian Life Center and fellowship times planned each night with a church wide dinner on Sunday.

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